

## OPERATIONAL RESERVE: NATIONAL GUARD READINESS WHEN CURRENT CONFLICTS END

BY

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# USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The past twenty years has seen the Army National Guard transform from a “hollow” strategic reserve to the indispensable operational reserve it is today. On 29 Oct 2008 the Secretary of Defense formally directed that the National Guard become an operational reserve. With the withdrawal of US Army forces from both Iraq and Afghanistan on the horizon, as well as anticipated DoD funding reductions, the Army’s exigent need for operational National Guard units will significantly diminish, and competition for reduced Army dollars will begin. In this environment the National Guard risks reverting to a hollow operational reserve. This paper will examine how the Army National Guard was configured prior to its transition to an operational reserve, describe the transition to the operational reserve, outline some of the major challenges it faces in becoming an operational reserve. It will then propose that a persistent training cycle, as well as full manning, decreased personnel non-deployability, sufficient full time training staff, and time to train adequately are essential foundations to maintenance of the National Guard as an operational reserve.





## OPERATIONAL RESERVE: NATIONALGUARD READINESS WHEN THE CURRENT CONFLICTS END

The past 20 years have seen the Army National Guard transform from a “hollow” strategic reserve to the indispensable operational reserve it is today. On 29 Oct 2008 the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) directed that the National Guard become an operational reserve. He did this in order to formally realign policies and procedures to reflect the new operational role it has been performing since 9-11 but was never designed to fill. To implement the Secretary’s directive, the Army Initiative Four (AI4) (Operationalizing the Reserves) Task Force was convened to create the execution plan, and released their results in September 2009. Active steps are being taken to fully operationalize the National Guard by 2019<sup>1</sup>. With forces drawing down in Iraq and a deadline imposed by the President to begin to reduce forces in Afghanistan in July of 2011<sup>2</sup>, however, soon the Active Component will have sufficient forces to handle demand, thus requiring less operational capability from the National Guard. With the expected “peace dividend”, reductions in funding could effectively end the National Guard’s ability to continue being an operational reserve. Given the less pressing need for the National Guard’s operational capability and competition for scarce defense dollars, the National Guard could risk reverting back to the hollow strategic reserve force. This paper will examine how the Army National Guard was configured prior to the direction that it become an operational reserve, how it is transitioning to an operational force today, and the major challenges facing the National Guard in maintaining its ability to be a true operational reserve.

## Army National Guard as the Strategic Reserve

“Traditional thinking has viewed the Guard...essentially as a ‘force of last resort,’ to be used after all possible Active Component solutions have been attempted.”<sup>3</sup>

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis M. McCarthy wrote recently.

“Prior to 1990...the Army National Guard... functioned as a strategic reserve or contingency force to support and supplement the operational AC. Strategically, it was assumed that the AC would be large enough to sustain the fight with forward deployed forces and prepositioned stocks; thus providing time for the RC to man, train, and equip its forces prior to deployment. The current demand for forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and evolving 21st Century security threats, have exceeded the AC's capabilities.”<sup>4</sup>

When the SecDef signed the memo directing the National Guard to transform to an operational reserve in 2008, it formally ended an era of the National Guard's role in the nation's defense as the strategic reserve. While it is clear that the National Guard has been acting in an operational capacity considering the influx and sustained operational employment of over 700,000 reservists since the GWOT began<sup>5</sup>, prior to the SecDef's memo the National Guard was still configured as the cold war strategic reserve. During the time the National Guard filled the role as the force of last resort, it provided an economy of force effort, with commensurate levels of resourcing, training and focus.

The National Guard of the strategic reserve days had significant challenges to overcome on the road to being a deployable and viable force, capable of a strategic counterpunch. It suffered systemic personnel, equipment, and training shortfalls from lack of priority and funding. The National Guard of the strategic reserve days had hand-me-down equipment from the Active Component that was no longer useful or had been

replaced by more modern equipment. The full time Active Guard Reserve manning levels were as low as 59% of authorized fill<sup>6</sup> with the ranks of the traditional Guardsmen equally insufficient. Of the Guardsmen present for training, significant numbers were non-deployable, with an ineffective tracking mechanism to identify those that were non-deployable, and limited methods to correct medical and dental non-deployable issues prior to mobilization. Often, lack of funds would cause a Guardsman or commander to have to choose between sending soldiers to professional military education or having them present at the most significant collective training event of the year, Annual Training (AT). Unit training and readiness suffered because funding limitations led to the unavailability of soldiers and leaders to train with their units during the essential collective training opportunity presented during annual training time. Lack of funding also greatly impacted the ability to purchase necessary supplies such as ammunition and repair parts needed for training, adversely impacting a unit's ability to perform realistic, relevant training for combat.

Many Guardsmen of the strategic reserve days had little expectation of actually being deployed or performing a war time mission. The National Guard, after all, had the reputation of being where soldiers went during the Vietnam War to avoid being sent to Vietnam. A patriotic individual could join the Guard, make a little extra money, help his or her community or state during emergencies, and practice being a soldier on the JV team, but the "real" soldiers, on the varsity team, were in the Active Component.

In order to send strategic reserve National Guard units into the fight, extensive time, effort, and money was needed to get them manned, equipped, and trained before they were ready to go to war, with an expectation that they would have the time to get

ready after mobilization. National Guard units were expected to be called to mobilization stations, where they would fill their ranks, then train to deployment standard, then deploy. Despite great shortcomings, the strategic reserve prior to 1990 was a military force that was available to answer the strategic call as it was designed and expected to do. It was a force that had essential military building blocks and experience in place that enabled it to be viable and ready, with time, to provide a critical military response. As compared to implementing a draft to answer the need for additional forces during wartime, the National Guard provided excellent strategic flexibility for the US.

#### Transition to Operational Reserve

Operation Desert Storm and the subsequent military draw down of the 1990's began the informal transition of the National Guard from strategic to operational. During Operation Desert Storm, over 37,000 National Guardsmen were activated and saw service in Southwest Asia<sup>7</sup>. Under the Total Force Policy, the National Guard was needed to provide many support units that would enable the Active Component to fight the war. The six months between when Iraq invaded Kuwait and coalition ground forces counterattacked allowed the National Guard support units sufficient time to mobilize and deploy. The three National Guard Maneuver Brigades that were activated, however, did not have sufficient time to be readied to be deployed in theater. During Desert Storm the National Guard was partially able to prove its ability to be operationally employed and to be a vital part of the campaign's success.

The military drawdown of the mid-1990's created the shortage of troops that has led to today's need to operationalize the National Guard. The United States Army Active Component that won Desert Storm (along with thirty one coalition partners) was

drastically cut to the point that today's total Army -- Active, Guard and Reserves -- is slightly larger than the Active Component of 1991 alone. Many of the soldiers who left the Active Component during that time joined the National Guard. These soldiers not only helped to fill the ranks of the National Guard, but also brought with them a combat-ready mentality and years of war fighting skills. The draw down, however, ultimately left the Active Component Army with insufficient combat forces to prosecute the GWOT alone. Faced with engaging in a sustained fight with insufficient Active Component forces, the Army would have either had to implement a draft or change how the strategic reserves would be employed. The first option was not politically acceptable, leaving the use of the strategic reserve as the only viable option.

As it became clear that the operational tempo and duration of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were beyond the capabilities of the Active Component alone, individuals and units of the National Guard began to flow piecemeal into the fight. The Guard was first called to fill low density specialized skills that were in short supply on active duty and required for support units integral to sustaining the fight. Unfortunately, the shortfalls of the strategic reserve days have had to be overcome, and the National Guard has been playing "catch-up" ever since this conflict began. The personnel shortages and non-deployability issues of the strategic reserve days caused the National Guard mobilization process to be handicapped, starting with the first National Guard unit deployments.

To further complicate the problem, the National Guard was reconfiguring and retraining to the modular force. National Guard units take years to change a unit type. First, significant amounts of time are needed to schedule every soldier through new

military occupational specialty (MOS) qualifying schools. Each soldier has to coordinate with his or her civilian employer to take time off from work to attend schools that can take several weeks or months to complete. Once the unit has all of the soldiers MOS qualified, it must start training as a unit. Given the mere thirty-nine training days a year, units can take a year or more to achieve squad level proficiency, then another year to get to platoon level proficiency, and finally a year to get to company level proficiency. MOS schooling and three training years ( $39 \times 3 = 117$  days) of collective training, however, cannot supply experience. NCOs and mid level officers lack the technical and tactical experience they would gain if they had come up through the ranks in their branch since the beginning of their careers. So, in addition to time to achieve collective training, a National Guard unit also takes many more years to grow experienced NCOs and officers in their branch. As the National Guard began to be called on more frequently, and with greater numbers of soldiers and larger units, the culmination of the strategic reserve shortfalls coupled with transformation to modularity compounded the mobilization and training challenges that exist today.

#### The National Guard as the Operational Reserve Today

The National Guard today exists as a manifestation of new iterative operational reserve policies, coupled with the policies of the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN), superimposed on an infrastructure attempting to make cold war strategic reserve systems and policies work. ARFORGEN and the twelve month mobilization policy are the two largest forcing functions that make the National Guard operational. Under the previous model, a unit would arrive at a mobilization station, then take the time to assemble soldiers to full manning, then train the unit, and finally deploy. The new model for deploying the National Guard has become train, mobilize and deploy.

Under the new model, units first need to gather all necessary manpower, then begin training at home station with the goal of minimizing time at the mobilization station, then report to the mobilization station to complete collective training, and finally deploy. This new paradigm has created several systemic problems, some of which cannot be repaired for current wars that must be addressed so that the National Guard will not be forced into crisis management readiness for future military conflicts.

Under the new mobilization model, National Guard units need first to fill their ranks at their home station in order to begin to train the unit for mobilization. Since the National Guard was not authorized to fill its units to full manning, the very first unit that mobilized, and every subsequent unit, has been required to borrow manpower from other units to fill their ranks. This act of cross leveling has caused perpetual turmoil in the National Guard. The “losing” unit is affected on several levels. Unlike Active Component units, the vast majority of National Guard Units are manned geographically. The soldiers of any given unit are usually all from the same town or community; they live and work there. As a result, when a soldier is borrowed to fill a slot in another unit, that soldier’s slot will probably remain unfilled. The magnitude of the impact a unit faces upon the loss depends on the soldier’s rank and responsibility, but it can potentially devastate a unit’s chain of command and will adversely affect its ability to perform collective training. Under current policy and practice, that borrowed soldier is unavailable for deployment for five years from the time he returns from deployment. The result is that the soldier will probably be unavailable when his original under-strength unit is deployed. If the soldier is not willing to volunteer to go with the unit, a filler must be found, and the problem continues to compound through the National

Guard. Manning problems also affect National Guard recruiting and retention by breaking the strong bonds and unit cohesion that is a strength of this community-based organization.

Non-deployable soldiers have compounded the manning problem. The ability to screen, identify, and address non-deployability issues is integral to filling a National Guard unit to prepare for mobilization. The greatest non-deployability issues affecting readiness are medical and dental non-readiness. Due to lack of medical facilities, doctors, and time, the current National Guard Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) fails to check soldiers thoroughly enough to adequately identify many medical and dental non-deployability issues. This results in significant numbers of soldiers being pulled off a mission once they are medically and dentally screened at a mobilization station. Even if an SRP were able to identify medically or dentally non-deployable soldiers, there is currently no method to address the identified problems until the soldier is 180 days from mobilization. This 180 day medical policy allows mobilizing soldiers to have access to TriCare medical coverage to help solve medical issues in advance of a deployment. While this policy is making a positive difference and gives medical treatment to soldiers who are identified and whose conditions are treatable within 180 days, there are still far too many soldiers reaching mobilization stations with non-deployable medical and dental issues. As a recent example, the 30<sup>th</sup> HBCT of the North Carolina National Guard that deployed to Iraq in 2009 identified over 126 soldiers as non-deployable before reaching mobilization station. Another 173 were screened out once at mobilization station<sup>8</sup>.



The impact of losing soldiers at mobilization station is significant. To avoid this, some units arrive at mobilization station over-manned to anticipate non-deployability losses. This is done by “borrowing” soldiers from other units, exacerbating the cross leveling problem discussed earlier. Other units make last minute contact with their State or with National Guard Bureau to try to find replacements. In this case, if a soldier is identified he/she will not have had all the required home station training, and almost certainly will not have been included in any of the unit’s collective training. Finally, if no means are found to replace non-deployable soldiers, the unit simply goes under-manned. This certainly is not an ideal solution for a unit about to enter combat and must be addressed.

The current National Guard full time staffing continues to be based on the strategic reserve model configured to respond to the cold war. As a result, full time manning, consisting of Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) soldiers, technicians, and civilian state employees, is not sufficient to sustain the current operational reserve force. The last time the DOD evaluated National Guard full time manning was in 1999, before the Guard was called on to act as an operational reserve<sup>9</sup>. Of the full time military manning required for FY2010, only 73 percent was authorized,<sup>10</sup> further complicating the problem. Under the strategic reserve model, it was assumed that a unit would arrive at mobilization station with limited collective training capabilities and would be provided the required skills, and full unit collective training, at the mobilization station. Much of the full time force, as a result, was focused on individual and lower level collective training, as well as on the administrative and maintenance requirements between drills.

Further, the full time force manpower is a state asset, expected to be sent anywhere in the state to best answer the needs of the state. These personnel may move from unit to unit throughout the state pursuing promotion opportunities, which exacerbates unit turbulence. As a result the full time National Guardsmen may not be the experts in tactical and technical knowledge for their particular type unit.

When the Undersecretary of Defense implemented the twelve month mobilization policy in 2007<sup>11</sup>, it forced the National Guard to minimize mobilization station training time, as that time counted against the twelve month mobilization. Every day a Guardsman was at mobilization station was a day he/she would not be in theater fighting the war. As a result, National Guard units preparing to deploy needed to accomplish as many mobilization tasks as possible at home station. Pre-mobilization Training Assistance Elements (PTAE) were established to help units train at home station.

A PTAE consists of a headquarters section with a LTC, a MAJ and a SGM and other soldiers in a ratio of one PTAE soldier for every sixty mobilizing soldiers. It exists in any state or territory in which a National Guard unit is within a year of mobilizing. This element is made up of soldiers who have recent experience in theater and who volunteer to assist their fellow Guardsmen for a year, in a full time Title 32 status, to prepare for mobilization. After attending PTAE School to ensure they are qualified to assess and document pre-mobilization training, they fall in on mobilizing units to ensure that pre-mobilization activities happen to First Army standards. These experienced and trained soldiers act as an independent set of eyes for the state Adjutant General who must validate that his soldiers are ready before they arrive at mobilization station. The

PTAE also performs an important function by bringing up to date, relevant wartime experience and the latest doctrine and training techniques and procedures (TTPs) to the organization they help prepare. They act as a bridge between current practices in theater and standardized training requirements.

In addition to the PTAE to increase the training proficiency of the current operational National Guard, units need more training time prior to mobilizing. The strategic reserve model for mobilization assumed there would be sufficient time to train a unit at mobilization station. Demands of an operational reserve, however, necessitate that National Guard units are at a higher training state before mobilization in order to get them in theater faster. Current practice is for a brigade-sized unit to take additional training days two years prior to mobilization and up to 29 1/2 days of additional training one year in advance in order to be prepared to minimize time at mobilization station<sup>12</sup>. While the quantity of increased training days may need to be varied, the old model of thirty nine training days per year has proven insufficient to ensure a unit is prepared to enter the mobilization station and be responsive to operational needs.

While this additional training time is necessary, it violates a long standing agreement National Guardsmen have with their employers and families. Under the strategic reserve model, employers and families could plan on a Guardsman being gone one weekend a month and two weeks a year to perform annual training. The added days have strained relations between Guardsmen and their employers and families, causing all additional sacrifice. When the Guardsmen are away for the additional training time, employers must find other ways to accomplish their work, reconfigure pay systems, vacation policy, and a host of other issues that they did not previously have to

consider. A Guardsman was either performing his typical thirty nine days a year training, or was mobilized. Both these states were well understood by employers, backed by law, and working well. The new training necessary for an operational reserve National Guard needs to be systemically addressed to get both the employers and Guardsmen back in synch.

In addition to working thru adapting processes to preparing units for deployment, the operational reserve National Guard is also providing a substantial number of its individual soldiers who have been mobilized to augment other operational support missions. Also, State's continue to require their Guardsmen to be ready to respond to emergencies, so the Guard is preparing for those contingencies as well. Finally, the CBRNE consequence management and response force mission has recently been assigned to the National Guard, which is yet another mission that defines the National Guard as an operational reserve today.

### The Impetus for Change

Adapting the processes and policies of the Cold War strategic reserve to the current operational reserve has been an incremental, disjointed, "learn as you go" effort. In order to stop the incremental efforts and acknowledge the sustained operational performance of the National Guard, the Secretary of Defense directed an "overarching set of principles and policies"<sup>13</sup> be put in place to change the National Guard from a strategic to an operational reserve. The "learn as you go" model which the National Guard has been operating under has matured to the point that it now enhances the National Guard's ability to train and deploy operational forces in a more repeatable, predictable fashion. It is also doing a better job of addressing redeployment and

reintegration issues, as well as other important initiatives for National Guard soldiers, but it still falls woefully short of meeting many important needs of the National Guard.

As a result of the SecDef's directive, Army Initiative 4 (IA4) Task Force was established to create the guiding principles for the new or revised policies and procedures that will institutionalize the operational reserve. This task force created nine broad transformation effort areas that if adequately addressed, will correct the deficiencies that exist today and establish a sustainable operational reserve in the future. These transformational effort areas are based on shortfalls and problems the National Guard force is currently encountering as they struggle to adapt from the Cold War strategic reserve model to today's operational reserve model. They holistically consider changes that are necessary to transform the reserve component into a viable operational reserve for future conflicts. They are: Readiness/ARFORGEN, Army Enterprise Transformation, Medical/Dental Readiness, Human Capital Strategy, Adapt Employer Relationships, Full Time Support, Adapt Reserve Component Access Authorities, Adapt Force Structure, and Adapt Equipping Strategy<sup>14</sup>. While the United States continues to be engaged in wars that have vital national interests<sup>15</sup> at stake, it is very likely that the areas identified in AI4 will continue to be planned and implemented and policies and systems will begin to be adopted that will eventually better integrate and support the operational reserve National Guard. What is not certain is what this operational reserve will resemble when the current conflicts are over.

#### How to Maintain an Operational Reserve Capability in the Future

Gen McKinley, the Chief of the National Guard, recently said: "We can't go back,"<sup>16</sup> to the strategic reserve model. Former Chief of the National Guard Bureau and current Deputy Commander of USNORTHCOM LTG Blum explained "you can't put the

toothpaste back in the tube”<sup>17</sup> when describing the future of the National Guard. The National Guard leadership is clear that the National Guard needs to remain an operational reserve. The “pain and strain” the National Guard has experienced transforming in these conflicts necessitates that we don’t try to put the toothpaste back in the tube. We cannot undo the policies and procedures that have gotten us to the current state and projected state – clearly the National Guard must continue to be an operational reserve when the current conflicts are over.

With probable post war reduction in DOD funding, it is not realistic to assume that the National Guard will obtain funding to fully implement or continue at full funding all the areas planned to be implemented under AI4. However, it is imperative that funding remain for readiness and that it is top priority. In order to continue to be ready and to fulfill the role as an operational reserve National Guard, underlying readiness deficiencies must be addressed and repaired, and the new systems must remain in place. The following readiness areas need to be non-negotiable priorities to be addressed as the National Guard moves into the future: full manning, decreased personnel non-deployability, full time training staff, and time to train adequately. In order to maintain readiness the Army needs to establish a persistent training cycle and systemically address each of these deficiencies.

#### Full Manning

National Guard units need to be able to fill their units to total authorized strength. In order to be an operational reserve, and be ready to answer the Nation’s call, either for overseas contingencies or for defense of the homeland, the ability to train collectively and operate as a fully functioning unit is an essential first step. Any option that does not man fully will ultimately harm the nation and states that rely on the

capabilities of the National Guard. If full manning does not occur, the National Guard will continue to face the problems it faces today in manning units that are activated, borrowing personnel from other units to make up shortfalls. This cross leveling may provide a temporarily fix that meets the short term requirement of the unit, but will systemically break the units losing soldiers and will create perpetual compounding personnel turmoil for any follow-on missions.

Manning units to near 100% will allow National Guard units to train as cohesive units as they will fight and deploy. It will break the perpetual compounding cycle of cross leveling that has been the reality of the National Guard since the first unit was deployed in 2001.

#### Decreased Personnel Non-Availability

In order to permanently address and repair the chronic medical/dental non-deployable problems, the National Guard needs to establish a greater medical professional support staff. While having full time National Guard Medical and Dental Officers and staff would be the most responsive and desirable method, recruiting and filling existing medical slots have proven to be almost insurmountable tasks. Adding a robust professional Army medical staff to 54 states and territories is not likely to be achievable, even if getting the authorizations for those slots are achievable. Contracting medical support is a more feasible option that could allow medical professionals to conduct suitable medical examinations to identify medical deployability issues. While it might be beyond the scope of contracted medical support to solve the identified problems, this method would give commanders visibility of medically non-deployable soldiers so that they could track and proactively front load soldiers needing medical care if the unit should be notified of deployment. Further, soldiers identified with medical

issues by the contracted medical support could chose to use their civilian doctors to resolve the problems and then update their mobilization status once resolved. By incorporating better medical/dental screening coverage, a great majority of the medical/dental non-deployability problems of soldiers will be eliminated by addressing these issues as a part of routine National Guard business.

#### Full Time Training Staff

The PTAE model should become the basis for full time military staffing for the future National Guard. The PTAE is specifically oriented toward training, but the concept may be applied equally across other areas. For example, pre-mobilization logistics assistance elements or personnel assistance elements should be explored as the manning and functional model for full time support to the future National Guard. These soldiers can continue to do many of the traditional support and administrative functions they performed in the past, but because they are now full-time soldiers, they have the time and capacity to become subject matter experts. TRADOC and First Army should establish periodic required training for the new full time PTAE-like element that gives them training from operational experts familiar with the latest doctrine and TTPs expected in future operations. First Army educates the full time force to ensure that Guard units are training to standard as well as maintaining proper documentation which they will need to expedite mobilization station activities. These full time PTAE-like Guardsmen will not take responsibility away from National Guard commanders for the readiness of their units; rather, they may be used as subject matter experts to help incorporate the latest training trends and to ensure administrative compliance with potential future mobilization requirements.



By restructuring the full time force to include PTAE like capabilities, dedicated resources will focus on training and readiness issues. By including periodic training to the PTAE-like organizations, these elements can maintain tactical and technical mastery and use that information to increase the readiness of their State's units. The PTAE-like function is critical to ensuring the National Guard maintains its ability to perform in a tactically and technically proficient manner.

#### Time to Train Adequately

In order to maintain proficiency at home station and continue to act as an operational reserve, the National Guard will require more time to train than was previously allocated to it as a strategic reserve. Under the current ARFORGEN model, units within one year of deployment receive additional Annual Training days, depending on the size and type of unit (up to 29 ½ days for an Infantry Brigade), to perform pre-mobilization tasks. An increase in training days once every five years is predictable enough that it can be coordinated with soldiers and their employers. This additional time allows the unit to conduct a more thorough screening for non-deployable soldiers, lock in and stabilize the unit manning roster, and train and certify all individual soldier tasks as well as many collective tasks.

#### Persistent Training Cycle

The ARFORGEN model, while not perfect, has done a good job of aligning most of the resources necessary to prepare units to deploy to today's fight. The Army National Guard, as well as the rest of the Army and other supporting organizations, are familiar with the process. When the current conflicts end, despite a persistent threat, the Nation will not likely find itself fighting two more foes that replace those in Iraq and Afghanistan that require identical force structure to fight them and ARFORGEN will be

able to adapt to a steady state model. With that change, however, the National Guard needs to be funded to enable it to keep units at the required readiness levels to effectively participate in ARFORGEN. As planned, a National Guard unit will enter the “Ready” phase of ARFORGEN every five years. Thus, it must be ready for employment every five years. Resources must be aligned to enable this cycle of readiness. During the ready phase, the unit may be employed either in a homeland defense role or in an overseas deployment. If not employed operationally, the unit should go through a combined training center rotation. By focusing the National Guard resources on achieving full readiness of approximately one-fifth of units every year, the National Guard can maintain itself as an operational reserve, even in times of reduced funding. This will also ensure the National Guard and Active Component Army continue to operate side by side as one team. Participation by the National Guard in ARFORGEN can enable the Total Army Force to better support ongoing overseas contingency operations such as in Kosovo and the possible stay behind missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and homeland defense operations such as CCMRFs. This will keep the total Army trained, ready and rapidly deployable.

### Conclusion

Transitioning the Army National Guard from a strategic to an operational reserve has been difficult, with much work still necessary to complete until it is institutionalized. However, the transition has been critical to providing trained and ready National Guard forces to the war effort. The transition from the strategic reserve deployment model of mobilize, then train, then deploy to today’s operational reserve model of train, mobilize, deploy was necessary to support the needs of today’s wars. While no one can predict with certainty what the next war will require of the Nation’s armed forces, the National

Guard must continue to train as an operational reserve to ensure that sufficient forces are ready and capable for persistent prolonged conflict we are currently in as well as any large wars. If the National Guard continues to be included in the ARFORGEN model when the current wars end, and the National Guard prioritizes full-manning, reduction of non-deployables, full-time training staff, and time to train adequately, it will be ready, responsive and capable for the next war.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Army G-3/5/7 “*Army Initiative #4 update to Army Reserve Force Policy Committee*” Briefing Slides 19 May 2009, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp> (AI4TF Home page) (accessed February 7, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Barack Obama, “*Afghanistan*” speech, West Point, NY, December 1, 2009. Transcript downloaded from <http://www.time.com/time/politics/article/0,8599,1944540-2,00.html> (accessed February 2, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Dennis M. McCarthy, “Using the Reserve Component To Best Advantage,” Reserve Officer Association Online Magazine, December 2009, [http://www.roa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=0912\\_ASDRA](http://www.roa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=0912_ASDRA) (accessed February 7, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> 2009 U.S. Army Posture Statement, “Transforming the Reserve Components (RC) to an Operational Force” Information Paper, [http://www.army.mil/aps/09/information\\_papers/transforming\\_reserve\\_components.html](http://www.army.mil/aps/09/information_papers/transforming_reserve_components.html) (accessed February 5, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> McCarthy, “Using the Reserve Component.”

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Reserve Forces : Army National Guard and Army Reserve Readiness for 21st Century Challenges* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, September 2006), 14.

<sup>7</sup> “National Guard in Desert Storm”, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/army/arnng-history-ds.htm> (accessed February 2, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> HBCT *Lessons Learned First Army AAR*, First Army East, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Reserve Forces: Army Needs to Finalize an Implementation Plan and Funding Strategy for Sustaining an Operational Reserve Force* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office. September 2009), 19.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, 19.

<sup>11</sup> David S. Chu, *Revised Mobilization/Demobilization Personnel and Pay Policy for Reserve Component Members Ordered to Active Duty in Response to the World Trade Center and Pentagon Attacks – Section 1* (Washington, DC: The Pentagon, March 15, 2007), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Aberle, *Maximizing Pre-Mobilization Training at Home Station*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 13, 2009), 11.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, “*Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*” Department of Defense Directive Number 1200.17, Washington, DC, October 29, 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Army G-3/5/7 “*Army Initiative #4 update to Army Reserve Force Policy Committee*” Briefing Slides 19 May 2009, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp> (AI4TF Home page) (accessed February 7, 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Barack Obama, “*Afghanistan*” speech, West Point, NY, December 1, 2009. Transcript downloaded from <http://www.time.com/time/politics/article/0,8599,1944540-2,00.html> (accessed February 2, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke, “*Chief says Guard cannot go back to strategic reserve*” U.S. Air Force Web site, August 2009, <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123163325> (accessed February 4, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> H. Steven Blum, “NORTHCOM” lecture, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, February 1, 2010, cited with permission of LTG Blum.